Megan Ross Rodriguez

At the end of February, a large crate wrapped in caution tape and accompanied by a sign announcing the Race Experience Kiosk appeared in Mellon lounge. When the crate opened, it revealed that this "Race Experience" is a special photo booth with software that allows participants to see what they might look like as a different "race." The purpose of this kiosk is to demonstrate that race is a construct rather than a biological reality, but at the same time racism is a real, pervasive problem.

Along with this experience, the kiosk provides students with supplementary materials, including a "Race Literacy Quiz." These materials come from the PBS website designed to accompany Race – The Power of an Illusion, a short documentary trilogy produced by California Newsreel. The first question on the Race Literacy Quiz illuminates the fact that there are not any genes that "separate all members of one race from all members of another." The website adds even more detail, showing through a study that members of different so-called races are just as likely to be genetically similar as members of the same race.

The supplementary material also tackles the development of racist thinking. For example, this material identifies one of the main causes linked to the development of white supremacist thinking in the United States as The Declaration of Independence. It states that when the declaration that "all men are created equal" posed a challenge to slavery, some people began to use race as a justification of the abhorrent practice. While many historians identify the origins of racism in what is now the United States as occurring much earlier, these materials focus on The Declaration of Independence and Thomas Jefferson, perhaps in an attempt to utilize the version of history that most children learn in schools in the U.S.

(continued on page 3)
Disappearing Feminist Bookstores

Where have all of the bookstores gone? Feminist bookstores rose with the second wave of feminism in the United States, beginning in the 1970s and reaching a peak of around 120 in the 1990s (Enjeti). Now, the number of feminist bookstores in the United States seems to fall around thirteen, according to most sources. One possible reason for the decline of the feminist bookstore is simply the decline of the independent bookstores in general. Although these stores have made some gains in recent years, the number of independent bookstores dropped significantly with the rise of chain stores like Barnes & Noble, Books-A-Million, and the now closed Borders, in addition to internet retailers like Amazon.

However, the issue of feminist bookstores is in fact more complicated. When these bookstores originally began to open, their purpose was to fill gaps in the stock carried by most other book retailers and libraries. It was difficult to find books by women or feminist texts. As activism increased, feminist bookstores met the growing need for space to gather and distribute printed feminist materials. They also supported the growing push for women's studies programs in colleges and universities (Hogan).

Thanks to the efforts of activists, women's studies courses were adopted by most higher education institutions, and general bookstores began to carry sections on women's studies topics. A split also occurred between academic feminism and community activism that injured the feminist bookstore, which used to be a space for both. Some people no longer saw the need for this space (Hogan).

The internet also competes for the functions once fulfilled by feminist bookstores. Any book can now be ordered online at a much lower price than independent bookstores can offer. Furthermore, some feminists have seen the value of internet space, while forgetting the value of physical feminist space once encapsulated by feminist bookstores. The future of feminist bookstores is far from certain, but some stores, like BookWoman in Austin, Texas, have been open for forty years and show no signs of giving up. Other enduring feminist bookstores include Bluestockings in New York City, Women and Children First in Chicago, and Charis Books and More in Atlanta.

Sources

Presidential Candidates on Women’s Health and Rights

The following chart examines some policies in regard to women’s health and rights of four top candidates from the Democrat (D) and Republican (R) parties. All of the information comes from the candidates’ websites. The candidates are listed in alphabetical order. For more information, visit hillaryclinton.com, tedcruz.org, berniesanders.com, and donaldjtrump.com.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hillary Rodham Clinton (D)</th>
<th>Ted Cruz (R)</th>
<th>Bernie Sanders (D)</th>
<th>Donald Trump (R)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| -Supports women’s reproductive rights  
-Will attempt to institute legislation requiring paid family leave  
-Pay Equity  
-Affordable child care  
-Increase support for survivors of sexual assault on college campuses and increase preventative measures | -Investigate Planned Parenthood and end its funding  
-Support anti-choice policies  
-Repeal Affordable Care Act | -Expand Planned Parenthood  
-12 weeks of paid family leave  
-Pass Paycheck Fairness Act  
-Make childcare more widely available  
-Expand protections from the Violence Against Women Act and the Family Violence Prevention and Services Act | -Does NOT support funding of Planned Parenthood as long as it continues to offer abortions  
-Repeal Affordable Care Act |
In another time:

I would have been carrying signs labeled “Votes for Women”, while I wore long sleeved dresses that clung tightly to my body in an effort to hide it.

But, after a rally, I would have been retreating home to work on the mindless cleaning.

If, during the day, politics were discussed away from the rally, it would be expected for me to remain silent.

Because I would be considered half the value that I am now, which still isn’t what I’m worth.

***

Don’t:

Wear a shirt that makes your chest look big.

Let your hair grow unless it’s on top of your head, in that case, keep it long.

Make jokes, because you aren’t funny. You can’t be funny.

Watch movies that aren’t chick flics, too many emotions.

Leave the house unless you’re going shopping either for groceries or clothes.

Walk around alone at night. It’s your own fault if you do.

Ask for rights. You don’t deserve them like they do.

***

I was named after my Italian-born great grandmother. Her real name was Bianca, but she changed it to Blanche, it sounded more American. From what I hear, she was always in the kitchen cooking, even when guests were over, that was where she was. My mother told me that she wouldn’t approve of my feminism. I’m not sure though if it’s that she doesn’t agree with me or that she would be afraid to admit the things she really wants. I have no pressure to be married young, being able to cook for a large family every day, finding satisfaction in housework. My name remains the same.

Racism Explored Through Experience Kiosk

(continued from page 1)

Many people know that Thomas Jefferson, who penned the document in question, owned slaves. However, a point highlighted by the papers at the Race Experience Kiosk that may be unknown to some is that he was one of the first people in the United States to write down the notion of white superiority over other races, especially enslaved black people.

Earlier in February, the Black Student Union put together a bulletin board in Mellon lounge that exposed some of the racist comments being posted by members of the SU community on Yik Yak, a website that is essentially an anonymous Twitter based in geographic location. The purpose of the Race Experience Kiosk is to continue the conversation about racism on the campus and in larger communities.

While some people on campus believe that the kiosk can open a valuable dialogue, others worry that it might only bolster the racism on campus – that some people will not understand the full implications of the experience, it seems to succeed in opening avenues for discussion about these issues.

Source

Megan Ross Rodriguez
Spring Intern

Women’s Resource Center Hours

Monday
11:30-12:00; 2:00-4:00

Tuesday
9:00-1:00

Wednesday
11:30-12:00; 5:45-6:30

Thursday
9:00-2:00

Stop By and Meet Our Staff

The Women’s Resource Center offers faculty, staff and students a place to relax and study, referrals to campus and community resources, and a library related to women, history, education, psychology, biblical studies, and much more.

Karol Kovalovich Weaver
Director of the Women’s Studies Program, History Professor

Nirvana Thakur
Student Worker

Megan Ross Rodriguez
Spring Intern

Caroline Adams
Teaching Assistant

Women’s Lacrosse against Marywood 4:00 p.m.
4/13 Chalk the Walk to End Street Harassment
   Kurtz Lane 11:00 a.m.
4/13 Women’s Lacrosse against Dickinson 4:00 p.m.
4/14 Baseball against Wesley 4:00 p.m.
4/16 Men’s Tennis against Moravian 1:00 p.m.
4/16 Women’s Lacrosse against Catholic 1:00 p.m.
4/16 Women’s Tennis against Moravian 1:00 p.m.
4/17 Men’s Tennis against Drew 1:00 p.m.
4/17 Women’s Tennis against Drew 1:00 p.m.

March is Women’s History Month
April is Sexual Assault Awareness Month
WomenSpeak meets on Mondays at 6:30 in the Student Life Suit
SU Enactus is collecting lightly used business clothes to donate to the women’s shelter in Bloomsburg. Drop off donations in the box on the second floor of Apfelbaum any time this semester.

4/12 Men’s Lacrosse against Marywood 4:00 p.m.
4/12 Softball against Messiah, 1:00 p.m., 3:00 p.m.
4/6 Women’s Lacrosse against Moravian 4:00 p.m.
4/9 Baseball against Catholic 1:00 p.m., 3:30 p.m.
4/9 Softball against Catholic 1:00 p.m., 3:00 p.m.
4/9 Women’s Lacrosse against Scranton 1:00 p.m.
4/10 Baseball against Catholic 12:00 p.m.
4/10 Softball against Wilkes, 3:00 p.m., 5:00 p.m.
4/12 Laura Pappano, “Balls, Brains, and Brawn,”
   MR1-5, 6:30 p.m.

3/21 Reading by Diane Roberts Isaacs Auditorium
   7:30 p.m.
3/29 Baseball against Gettysburg, 3:30 p.m.
3/30 Women’s Lacrosse against Randolph-Macon,
   4:00 p.m.
3/30 Women’s Tennis against Scranton, 3:30 p.m.
3/30 Softball against Cedar Crest, 3:00 p.m., 5:00 p.m.
4/1 Shakespeare Residency: Staged Reading 6:00 p.m.
   Isaacs Auditorium
4/2 Shakespeare Residency 9:00 a.m., 10: 30 a.m.,
   2:00 p.m., 3:30 p.m., 5:00 p.m. Isaacs Auditorium
4/3 Shakespeare Residency 8:30 a.m., 10:00 a.m.
   Isaacs Auditorium
4/2 Softball against Messiah, 1:00 p.m., 3:00 p.m.
4/6 Women’s Lacrosse against Moravian 4:00 p.m.
4/9 Baseball against Catholic 1:00 p.m., 3:30 p.m.
4/9 Softball against Catholic 1:00 p.m., 3:00 p.m.
4/9 Women’s Lacrosse against Scranton 1:00 p.m.
4/10 Baseball against Catholic 12:00 p.m.
4/10 Softball against Wilkes, 3:00 p.m., 5:00 p.m.
4/12 Peter Yin, “Essentialism: The Two Faces of Women’s
   Resource Center”
4/12 Laura Pappano, “Balls, Brains, and Brawn,”
   MR1-5, 6:30 p.m.
4/13 Chalk the Walk to End Street Harassment
   Kurtz Lane 11:00 a.m.
4/13 Women’s Lacrosse against Dickinson 4:00 p.m.
4/14 Baseball against Wesley 4:00 p.m.
4/16 Men’s Tennis against Moravian 1:00 p.m.
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